

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are pending in the application. In the Office Action mailed December 4, 2003, claims 1-5, 12-17, and 23 are rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,147,687 to Wanderski (herein "Wanderski"), and claims 6-9, 11, 18-21, and 26 are rejected as obvious over Wanderski. Claim 10 is rejected as being obvious by Wanderski in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,047,357 to Bannon et al. (herein "Bannon").

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings are objected to for not designating a Prior Art legend in FIGS. 1, 2, 3, and 6 and for minor informalities of FIG. 1. In response, Applicant accordingly amended FIGS. 1, 2, and 3 as suggested by the Office Action, and a separate Letter to the Draftsperson and Submission of Replacement Formal Drawings are enclosed. However, Applicant respectfully traverses the objection of FIG. 6. In particular, FIG. 6 is clearly indicated as one of the embodiments of the present invention (Applicant's specification, page 3, lines 9-10 and page 8, line 17). Accordingly, for all these reasons, Applicant requests that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Objection to the Specification

The specification has been objected to for minor informalities. In response, Applicant amended the specification to correct the minor informalities cited in the Office Action and other minor grammatical and typographical errors found by the Applicant. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

Objection to the Claims

The claims have been objected to for minor informalities. In response, Applicant amended claims 1 and 24 to correct the minor informalities cited in the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the objection to claims 1 and 24 be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 1

Claim 1 recites as follows:

A method for presenting categorized information on a computer-enabled user interface, the method comprising:

- displaying one or more categories for the categorized information;
- receiving a user selection of a category of the one or more categories; and
- independently retrieving data associated with the selected category so that the displayed categories remain responsive to user interaction while the data is being retrieved.

The Office Action asserts that the retrieving step as recited in claim 1 is disclosed in col. 4, lines 61 through 63 of Wanderski. However, claim 1 does not recite data structure *updates* of a file management system. Rather, claim 1 recites "independently *retrieving* data associated with the selected category so that the *displayed categories remain responsive* to user interaction while the data is being retrieved."

The present invention provides a system and method for presenting categorized information where the display of the categories and the retrieval of the categorized information are performed independently (Applicant's specification, page 2, lines 14-15). As a result, the displayed categories remain responsive to any user interaction while the categorized information is being retrieved (Applicant's specification, page 2, lines 15-16). In one embodiment, the display of the information is handled by one thread, while the retrieval of the information is handled by another thread (Applicant's specification, page 2, lines 16-19). Thus, multiple optional features can be implemented to allow the user, for example, to select multiple categories at a time, to cancel a retrieval operation, to change priority of a category being retrieved, to view incomplete directory data, and to automatically retrieve frequently chosen categories (Applicant's specification, pages 8 through 10).

In contrast, Wanderski does not relate to the retrieval of categorized information. Instead, Wanderski discloses a way to update the tree while allowing the user to interact with the tree view (Wanderski, Col. 4, lines 59-63). Specifically, one thread is used to generate and apply user requested changes to the data structure, while another thread is used to interact with the tree view (Wanderski, Col. 9, lines 52-55). However, similar to known prior art, while the tree information is being retrieved in Wanderski, the user cannot interact with the tree view until all the information is retrieved about the tree. In other words, the tree view is nonresponsive until all the nodes and elements of the tree

structure have been retrieved. Thus, Wanderski discloses nothing more than a way to allow the tree view to be responsive while the data structure of the tree is being changed or generated. But this is not the same as the retrieval step as recited in the claims. Applicant respectfully submits that the updating as disclosed in Wanderski is distinguishable from the retrieving as recited in claim 1. As a result, at minimum, the Section 102 rejection should be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 14

Claim 14 recites as follows:

A computer-implemented method for displaying a plurality of categories, the method comprising:
displaying a populated portion of the plurality of categories on a screen;
displaying a placeholder to represent an unpopulated portion of the plurality of categories, wherein the placeholder indicates to the user a retrieval status of the data required to populate the unpopulated portion.

The Office Action asserts that the step of displaying a placeholder as recited in claim 14 is disclosed in Col. 10, lines 10-13 of Wanderski. In response, Applicant amended claim 14 to clearly recite that the status indicates the retrieval of the data, and does not relate to any update state of the data. For similar reasons stated above relating to Wanderski, Applicant submits that the cited reference also fails to disclose the step of "displaying a placeholder . . . , wherein the *placeholder indicates* to the user *a retrieval status* of the data required to populate the unpopulated portion" recited in claim 14.

Independent Claim 18 and Dependent Claim 6

Claim 18 recites as follows:

A computer-implemented method for presenting data, the method comprising:
executing a first thread for displaying a graphical hierarchy having one or more nodes; and,
executing, independently of the first thread, a second thread of execution for retrieving data associated with at least one of the one or more nodes.

The Office Action asserts that the step of executing a second thread of execution for retrieving data recited in independent claim 18 and dependent claim 6 is disclosed in Col. 9, lines 52-55 and Col. 10, lines 44-48 of Wanderski. However, claims 6 and 18 do

not recite a separate thread for generating and applying changes to the data structure (e.g., to process the display updates). Rather, claims 6 and 18 precisely recite "executing, independently of the first thread, *a second thread of execution for retrieving data* associated with at least one of the one or more nodes." For the reasons stated in the remarks relating to claim 1, Wanderski again fails to disclose a separate thread for retrieving data as recited in claims 6 and 18. Moreover, because Wanderski fails to teach a recited element of the claims, it would not be obvious to make the asserted combination in the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the rejection of claims 6 and 18 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Independent Claim 26

Claim 26 recites as follows:

A system for presenting categorized information on a computer-enabled user interface, the system comprising:
a user interface for receiving a user selection of at least one category of information;
a means for executing a main thread for requesting the retrieval of data associated with the selected category;
a cache that is accessible to the main thread; and
a means for executing a worker thread for retrieving the requested data and storing it in the cache.

For the reasons stated in the remarks relating to claims 6 and 18, it would not be obvious to make the combination asserted in the Office Action. Moreover, the combination, whether proper or improper, fails to teach the expressly recited claim elements, and therefore cannot as a matter of law make obvious claim 26. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the rejection of claim 26 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Dependent Claims

Claims 2-13, 15-17, and 19-25 depend from claims 1, 14, and 18, respectively. Applicant submits that the dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims given the remarks and amendments above. Applicants reserve the right to present further arguments in the future with regard to these dependent claims in the event that the independent claims are deemed unpatentable. Accordingly,

Applicants request that the rejections of claims 2-13, 15-17, and 19-25 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

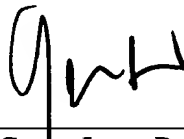
Request for Clarification

If the current rejections of the independent claims and dependent claims are maintained, Applicant respectfully requests that the Office further clarify how the cited references disclose a teaching of retrieving data as recited in the claims and taught in the specification.

CONCLUSION

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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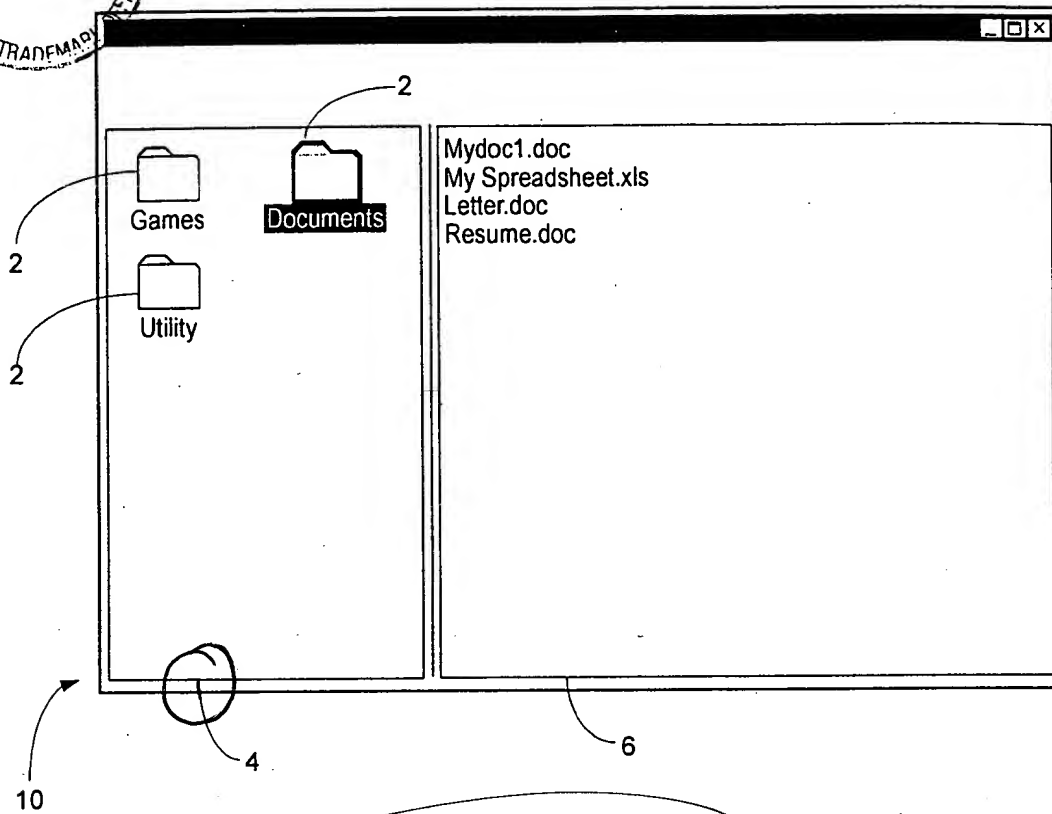
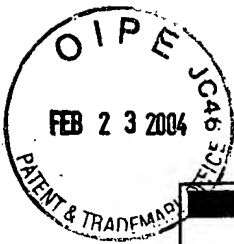


FIG. 1
(PRIOR ART)

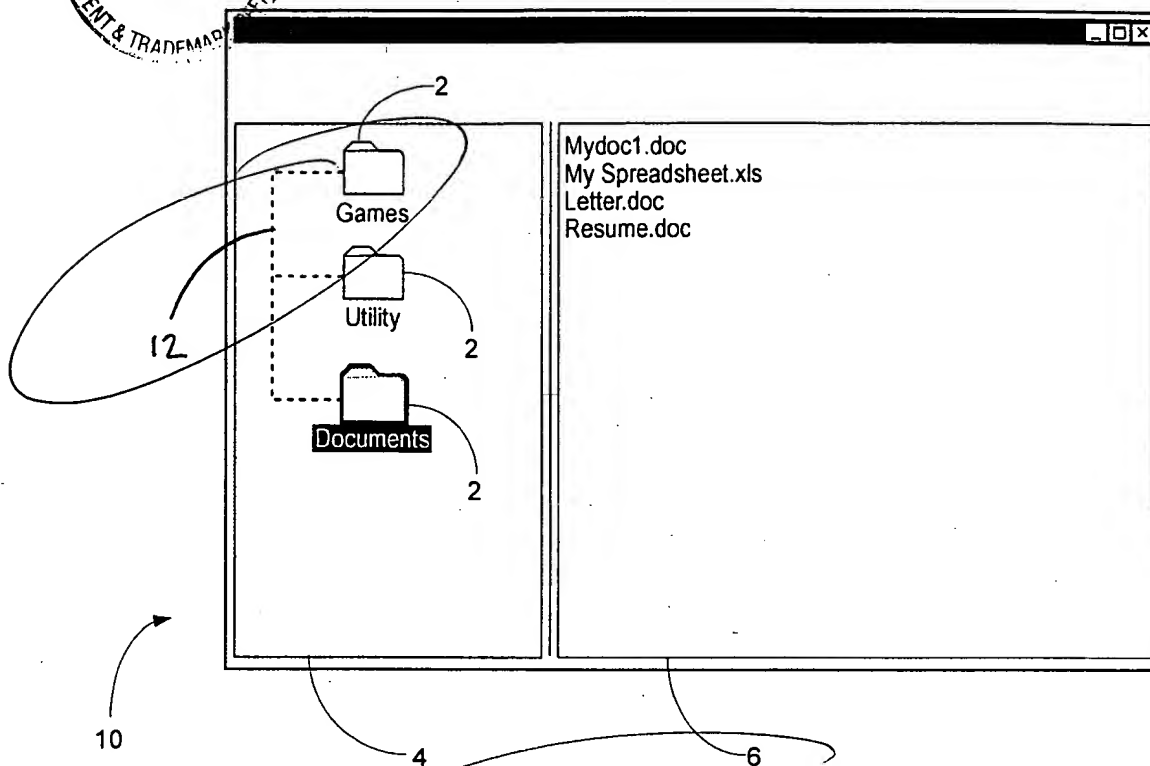


FIG. 2
(PRIOR ART)

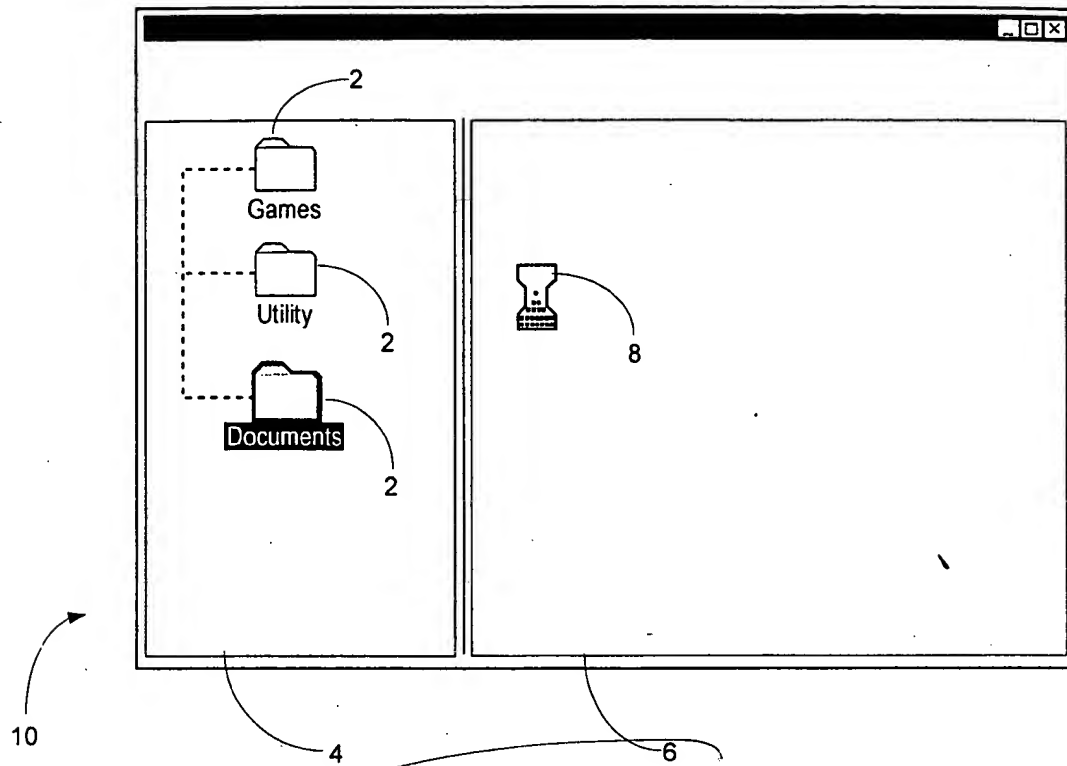


FIG. 3
(PRIOR ART)